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Review

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Epistolae Petri Vireti: The Previously Unedited Letters and a Register of Pierre Viret's Correspondence. Michael W. Bruening, ed.

Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance 494. Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2012. 654 pp. \$144.

To date, Pierre Viret's correspondence has been accessible to scholars largely through three works: Aimé-Louis Herminjard's *Correspondance des réformateurs*, the *Calvini Opera*, and Jean Barnaud's *Quelques lettres inédites de Pierre Viret*. The remainder of Viret's correspondence either was edited across a range of other works or remained unpublished. *Epistolae Petri Vireti* now provides a critical edition of all the remaining unpublished, partly published, or variously located published letters, thus completing the publication of Viret's correspondence. The editor's decision was both pragmatic and wise: rather than commit to a lengthy and perhaps overly ambitious project that would produce a new edition of all of the Reformer's correspondence, he has filled in the gaps in the existing material and in so doing performed a great service to scholarship.

The volume contains 20 percent of Viret's known correspondence, in total 155 letters, from the period 1541 to 1565. An appendix provides an additional twenty-five previously unpublished letters sent between the Lausanne pastors and professors and the Bernese magistrates and pastors that throw light on the conflict that led eventually, in 1559, to Viret's dismissal. More than half of the letters (eighty-two in total) were exchanged by Viret and Guillaume Farel. Although the editors of the older collections were aware of this exchange, they believed the letters said too little about Calvin and the Genevan Reformation to be worth including in their projects. Bruening has helped Viret and Farel's relationship emerge from the shadow of Calvin. The Council of Bern is also well represented (twenty letters plus those in the appendix). Rudolf Gwalther, pastor in Zurich, figures eleven times as writer or recipient, Heinrich Bullinger seven times, and Simon Sulzer, in Basel, five times. Among the other correspondents are, for example, Calvin, Peter Cyro, Béat Comte, Christophe Fabri, Johannes Gast, Nicolas des Gallars, Matteo Gribaldi, Hans Franz Nägeli, Korad Pellikan, David Wetter, Girolamo Zanchi, and Jaques Valier.

The editor has met the challenges of his task brilliantly. The principles guiding the editing process are laid out clearly and can be identified readily by the reader. The commentary is substantial, but the editor has withstood any temptation to drown the texts in explanation. The only disconcerting discovery is that the lines are not numbered — presumably a decision by the publisher — although such numbering is generally standard in critical editions of historical texts and very useful for generating precise citations.

Almost as important as the newly edited letters is the "Chronological Register of Viret's Correspondence" that appears at the end of the volume and contains a detailed description of all 759 known letters to or from Viret; this resource will be indispensable for research on Viret. With *Epistolae Petri Vireti*, Bruening has given researchers access to another link in the European-wide networks of the Reformation. It remains only for this reviewer to express his appreciation and gratitude.

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